White River Junction VA Healthcare System

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News Release

White River Junction VA Healthcare System administers COVID-19 vaccine to Veterans

White River Junction, Vt. — White River Junction VA Healthcare System rounds out 2020 by being able to offer the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to eligible Veterans. At 10:00 a.m. on Dec. 31, 2020, the facility's inoculated its first outpatient Veteran.

"I am honored to be here; I have hope," John Bacon, a 73-year-old Vietnam Navy Veteran said after receiving the vaccine. "I have hope that everyone will get this [vaccine] and we can gain back some feeling of safety again."

White River Junction VA Healthcare System is offering the COVID-19 vaccine to Veterans who are at the greatest risk for infection and severe illness based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's guidelines.

VA's goal is to offer the vaccine to all Veterans and healthcare workers who choose to be vaccinated. Due to a limited initial supply, many Veterans will not be able to get the vaccine during this initial rollout.

To reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19, Veterans should not come into a VA facility looking to receive a vaccine, nor to schedule a vaccine appointment. Care teams will contact Veterans as more vaccine becomes available, based on their personal risk factors and vaccine availability. However, Veterans can sign up to get updated information at this site: https://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/.

"I'm thrilled to get it; I think it's so important," Barbara Folk, a 97-year-old WWII Navy Veteran said about receiving the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. "I do hope everyone steps up to the plate. When Pearl Harbor was bombed, we stepped up, knowing it was our way to defend our nation. Find your patriotism and do your part."

For more information about VA's vaccine plans, visit VA's main vaccine information page at https://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/.

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